

## **Development of the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences***

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*In this paper, the two-year development process for the National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences (National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences, 2004) is chronicled in five phases: Context and Momentum, Exploration, Foundations, Framework, and Final Design. This development process yielded a set of ten integrated standards: four focusing on content and six on professional practice. The resulting Standards serve as a base for national continuity and future directions in family and consumer sciences education. They also allow for variations across states and teacher-education programs. This article provides a historical documentation of the standards-development effort and can inform others involved with similar work.*

The *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* (National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences [NATEFACS], 2004) provide a national model for what a beginning teacher in family and consumer sciences should know and be able to do. The *Standards* impact areas such as state-level family and consumer sciences teacher licensure, design and accreditation of teacher-education programs, and assessment of teacher candidates. The *Standards* were developed in a two-year, nationwide process that culminated in their approval by the National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences in December 2004. Implementation followed at the national, state, and local levels.

The vision of family and consumer sciences (FCS) education is to “empower individuals and families across the life span to manage the challenges of living and working in a diverse, global society. Our unique focus is on families, work, and their interrelationships” (“Vision and Mission,” 1994, p. 5). FCS is an essential component of middle and high school education. Nationally, more than 5.5 million students enroll in FCS classes each year, taught by 37,500 teachers (Werhan & Way, 2006). Through FCS classes and participation in the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) student organization, students build knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors in diverse areas of study, including career, community and family connections; consumer and family resources; human development; nutrition and wellness; and many others (National Association of State Administrators for Family and Consumer Sciences [NASAFACS], 2008).

Over the past 25 years, family and consumer sciences curriculum has undergone many changes, with less emphasis on skill areas such as clothing construction and food preparation,

and more emphasis on decision making and problem solving in preparation for family life, work life, and careers (see, for example, American Home Economics Association, 1989, 1994; American Vocational Association, 1994; Brown & Paolucci, 1979; Fox, 1998; Plihal, Laird, & Rehm, 1999). While a comprehensive discussion of these changes is beyond the scope of this paper, this evolution from home economics to family and consumer sciences reached a milestone in 1994 with adoption of a national conceptual framework and name change (*Positioning the Profession*, 1993; Simerly, Ralston, Harriman, & Taylor, 2000; Stewart, 1994). Subsequently, the National Association of State Administrators for Family and Consumer Sciences spearheaded development of the *National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education* (1998), which delineated goals for middle and high school student learning. The next step was to develop national standards for beginning teachers of family and consumer sciences.

The purposes of this article are to explain how the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* were developed, to present and briefly describe the *Standards*, and to discuss opportunities and issues related to their implementation. The article is a historic documentation of the development of these *Standards*. It also provides an example of a process for others who are involved in similar work.

### **Background**

Being an effective teacher relies on a complex and multifaceted set of qualities ranging from general pedagogical competencies to content-specific knowledge and skills (Danielson, 1996; Shulman, 1987). Having well-prepared teachers in every classroom is a central goal of the No Child Left Behind legislation and subsequent publications, in which a highly qualified teacher is defined as one who “knows what to teach, how to teach, and has command of the subject matter being taught” (United States Department of Education, n.d., ¶2). Most importantly, quality of teaching directly influences student learning. Wenglinisky (2000) found that “the greatest role in student achievement is played by classroom practices, followed by professional development that is specifically tailored to those classroom practices most conducive to the high academic performances of students” (p. 8). Further, the vision of school reform detailed by Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (1998) “relies not on new rules and controls, but on improving instruction” (p. xii).

Beginning in the late 1980s, work by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers, propelled a national movement toward performance-based standards, licensure, and assessment of beginning teachers (INTASC, 1992, 1995). According to INTASC, standards for beginning teachers “articulate what entering teachers should know, be like, and be able to do in order to practice responsibly, and to begin the journey toward deepening expertise” (1995, p. 3). This consortium articulated ten “INTASC Principles” that defined a common core of teaching knowledge for all teachers. The first of these principles stated, “The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students” (INTASC, 1992, p. 14). The core standards were “to be followed by additional specific standards for disciplinary areas” (p. 6), thus laying the groundwork for establishing national standards for teachers in various content areas, including family and consumer sciences.

Distinct from teacher licensure, which is granted by individual states based on state-specific standards and requirements, national standards for teachers provide a broad, widely encompassing definition of knowledge and skills expected of a beginning teacher in a particular

discipline area. Such national standards enable a field to develop a shared vision of teacher knowledge, attitudes, and skills that best facilitate student learning. In addition, they serve as a foundation for collaboration in teacher education, professional development, and accountability. They also provide a framework for research related to teaching, learning, and instructional practices (Bobbitt & Youatt, 2000; McCaslin & Parks, 2002). Such collaborative efforts are especially valuable in a field such as family and consumer sciences which is experiencing shortages of teachers (Werhan & Way, 2006). According to Judith Kreutzer, editor of the annual National Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Education Directory since 1996, FCS has limited, and in many cases, declining numbers of teacher education faculty (J. Kreutzer, personal communication, March 1, 2007). National standards for FCS teachers can provide an important framework for maintaining and strengthening teacher education, and ultimately for facilitating middle and high school student learning in family and consumer sciences.

### **Project Purposes and Goals**

The purposes of the project described in this paper were to develop, document, and disseminate national standards for family and consumer sciences teachers. The overall goal of developing these standards was to strengthen the field of FCS education and its positive impact on individuals, families, communities, and careers through enhanced student learning. Several specific goals and benefits were identified for the project:

- (a) to establish nationally-recognized standards of excellence for family and consumer sciences teacher preparation, professional development, assessment, and accountability;
- (b) to provide a framework for teacher education program development, accreditation, resource allocation, and accountability;
- (c) to enable collaboration and resource sharing for teacher preparation, professional development, and licensure/certification;
- (d) to increase identity, excellence, and visibility for family and consumer sciences teachers and programs. (Fox, 2003, p. 1)

### **Development Process for the Standards**

The development process for the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* (NATEFACS, 2004) took place over several years. At the conclusion of this process, the authors of this article examined the development timeline and events, and identified five major phases: Context and Momentum, Exploration, Foundations, Framework, and Final Design. These phases provide a structure for the descriptions of the development process. They are explained in the following sections and summarized in Table 1.

#### ***Context and Momentum***

The 1990s witnessed widespread implementation of the *INTASC Standards* and overall efforts for standards-based teacher licensure, preparation, and assessment, as was described earlier in the background section of this article. Also during this time, several professional organizations developed discipline-specific national standards for teachers in their respective areas. Among these were mathematics (National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, 1991), English language arts (National Council of Teachers of English, 1996), and physical education (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 1995). Across the country, more than 30 states redesigned teacher licensure based on the INTASC principles (INTASC, 1995). The

Table 1

*Development Timeline: National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences*

Phases and dates	Activities and accomplishments
<b>Context and Momentum</b> Prior to 2001	<b>1990s:</b> National standards for teachers established in many content areas. <b>1992:</b> INTASC Principles for Beginning Teachers published. Momentum built for states to develop standards-based teacher licensure. <b>1998:</b> <i>National (student) Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education</i> completed; need identified for corresponding national standards for FCS teachers.
<b>Exploration</b> 2001-2002	NATEFACS officers held initial discussions about developing <i>National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences</i> ; presentation proposals submitted for national conferences. <b>December 2002:</b> First national conference session about <i>Standards</i> , at ACTE annual meeting. Broad representation, strong interest. Stage set for national effort, with leadership by NATEFACS.
<b>Foundations</b> 2003	<b>February:</b> Career and Technical Teacher Education conference roundtable presentation. <b>April:</b> NATEFACS officers met to develop a conceptual base and plan-of-work. <b>June:</b> AAFCS conference session, with emphasis on FCS content and linkage to the student standards. <b>July:</b> Project Leadership Team solidified; pattern of two to four conference calls per month established; project website developed. <b>September:</b> First “Development Panel” conference; representation by 39 individuals from 25 states. Discussed possible purposes, structures, and content of the standards. <b>October-November:</b> Subcommittee from Development Panel created initial draft <i>Standards</i> . <b>December:</b> Initial draft disseminated, with review and e-mail feedback by Development Panel participants. Additional input gathered at ACTE annual meeting session attended by 50+ people.
<b>Framework</b> Jan - Aug 2004	<b>January-February:</b> Input used for further revisions and drafts. <b>March:</b> Draft disseminated for Development Panel input through structured e-mail survey. <b>April:</b> Revised draft developed and distributed to Development Panel. <b>May:</b> Project Leadership Team held 3-hour workshop at NASAFACS meeting; 20+ state FCS administrators provided input. <b>June:</b> Workshop at AAFCS annual meeting, individual and small-group feedback (3 hours, 100+ participants).
<b>Final Design</b> Sept - Dec 2004	<b>September:</b> “Development Panel” subcommittee reviewed input from spring and summer meetings and developed draft with set of 10 standards. <b>September-October:</b> Draft disseminated and input sought through online survey of 300+ individuals who had attended conference sessions and otherwise expressed interest. <b>October:</b> Second “Development Panel” conference; representation by 36 people from 20 states. Online survey data analyzed. Word-by-word review, editing, and consensus for set of 10 standards. Introductory paragraph outlined. <b>November:</b> External review and final editing. <b>December:</b> Standards distributed electronically to NATEFACS membership for final approval. Final version of the <i>National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences</i> disseminated at ACTE annual meeting. <i>Standards</i> posted at <a href="http://www.natefacs.org">http://www.natefacs.org</a> .

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) established standards for accomplished teachers, including family and consumer sciences as a component of career and technical education (NBPTS, 2000). The *National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education* were completed in 1998, through work coordinated by the National Association of State Administrators for Family and Consumer Sciences (NASAFACS, 1998). Peggy Wild, co-chair of the leadership team for the project to develop these national standards for students in

middle and high school FCS programs, stated that a need for corresponding FCS teacher standards was mentioned frequently during the meetings for developing the student standards (P. Wild, personal communication, July 15, 1998).

By the year 2000 it had become apparent that discipline-specific national standards for teachers were needed in order for family and consumer sciences to fully participate in an increasingly standards-based environment for teacher licensure, teacher education, and accreditation of teacher education programs. This challenge was undertaken by the officers of the National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences, an organization established more than 35 years ago with the purpose of improving and strengthening teacher education in family and consumer sciences (NATEFACS, n.d.). Furthermore, NATEFACS is an affiliate of the Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) Division of the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE). As a result, NATEFACS members have linkages with family and consumer sciences teachers and administrators who also are in the FACS Division and with professionals from a wide range of career and technical education areas who are members of other divisions of ACTE.

In summary, the Context and Momentum phase of this project spanned more than a decade during which major national shifts occurred toward performance-based standards for teacher licensure, with corresponding changes in design and accreditation of teacher-education programs. In particular, the states that participated in the INTASC efforts forged a new approach in which national standards provided major impetus in developing state-specific standards for teacher licensure. National professional organizations followed suit in developing teacher standards in specific disciplines and the role and responsibility emerged for NATEFACS to do this in family and consumer sciences.

### ***Exploration***

In the Exploration phase of this project, which began in 2001 and continued through 2002, NATEFACS officers introduced the possible development of national standards for family and consumer sciences teachers through various professional communications. They outlined project goals and explored options for organization, participation, and funding of the project; examined relationships between national teacher standards and accreditation of teacher-education programs; and submitted proposals for presentations at national conferences. In addition, they began to gather and review a wide range of documents that informed the standards-development process. These included performance-based standards for FCS teachers that recently had been developed in several states (e.g., Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Ohio, Oregon, Texas) and publications of national organizations involved with teacher standards, preparation, and licensure (e.g., INTASC, 1992, 1995; NBPTS, 2000; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2002). They also sought input from individuals knowledgeable about processes other professional organizations had used to develop standards for teachers, and they examined related documents published by these organizations (e.g., National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association for Business Education).

The first national conference session related to development of national FCS teacher standards was held at the December 2002 annual meeting of the Association for Career and Technical Education. The late-afternoon session drew more than 75 people from a wide range of roles in family and consumer sciences and other areas of career and technical education. NATEFACS officers used five questions to structure this session: (a) What are national

standards for teachers and what purposes do they serve? (b) Why are national standards for teachers of FCS important? (c) What theoretical foundations could be used for national standards? (d) How might national standards be structured? and (e) What processes could be used to develop national standards? The session culminated in a solid endorsement of a NATEFACS-led effort to develop national standards for FCS teachers (Fox & Erickson, 2002).

Thus, during the Exploration phase of the project, the need and opportunity for developing national FCS teacher standards was confirmed. NATEFACS officers gathered information that enabled a greater understanding of teacher standards and standards-development processes. The phase concluded with broad-based support for developing FCS teacher standards, and NATEFACS officers made a firm decision to proceed with the standards-development work.

### ***Foundations***

The effort identified as the “Project to Develop National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences” formally started during the Foundations phase. Early in 2003 the co-authors of this article officially assumed responsibility as the leadership team for the project, in conjunction with our roles as past-president, president, and president-elect of NATEFACS. During the Foundations phase, we developed various communication strategies, including frequent conference calls, stakeholder e-mail lists, and a project website. At a leadership team meeting in April 2003, we outlined project goals, strategies, and timelines and examined various publications related to teacher expectations, standards, and preparation (e.g. Chamberlain & Cummings, 2003; Danielson, 1996; Gray & Walter, 2001; INTASC, 1992, 1995; Martin-Kniep, 2000; McCaslin & Parks, 2002; NBPTS, 2000; Peterat & Smith, 2001). We also reviewed historical FCS education documents which provided grounding in previously published standards for FCS teachers and conceptual frameworks for FCS education (e.g., American Home Economics Association, 1974, 1989; Home Economics Teacher Educators, 1978).

During this time, we refined our conceptualization of the standards as a model of excellence that would set goals for essential preparation for FCS teachers. In particular, while acknowledging the broad preparation needed by all professional educators, we viewed the scope of the standards as being those characteristics and applications distinctive to middle and high school family and consumer sciences teachers. Thus, we conceptualized the standards as focusing on expectations for initial licensure of FCS teachers in relation to FCS content and to FCS-specific professional practice. Recognizing the challenges that surround delineating national standards due to varying perspectives among states, school districts, universities, and individual FCS professionals, we decided to propose the creation of a set of core standards that would emphasize areas for which there was broad national consensus.

We outlined several other areas as grounding for the standards. Consistent with current trends in education, we conceptualized the standards as focusing on teachers’ roles in enabling student learning, rather than on specified actions and abilities of teachers (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). In considering FCS content and pedagogy, we saw practical reasoning (a process through which individuals and families make value-based judgments about actions to take) as a key component of FCS education (Johnson & Fedje, 1999; Laster & Thomas, 1997; Montgomery & Davis, 2004). We also recognized the integral role of the four FCS education process areas delineated in the *National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education*: thinking, communication, leadership, and management (Fox, 2000; NASAFACS, 1998, 2008). In addition, we acknowledged several additional characteristics central to FCS education, including contextual teaching and learning, authentic assessment of student learning, and integration across

FCS content areas and with other disciplines (Berns & Erickson, 2002).

The conceptualization of the standards also brought attention to their futuristic role as a basis for initial teacher preparation that would influence family and consumer sciences students, their families, their careers, and society for many years to come (McCaslin & Parks, 2002). In this same vein, we recognized the interface of FCS with current and emerging social issues, such as obesity, personal financial stability, and societal demographics, whose impacts are yet to be fully seen (James, 1996; Reich, 2000). These changing and unknown future contexts further pointed to FCS teacher standards and corresponding teacher preparation as a foundation for lifelong learning, both for teachers and for their middle and high school students.

In addition to the conceptual work accomplished during the Foundations phase, two national conference sessions fostered linkages with other stakeholder groups. A session at the Career and Technical Teacher Education conference in February 2003 (sponsored by the National Centers for Research and Dissemination in Career and Technical Education) provided an opportunity to discuss the purposes and benefits of standards for teachers with other career and technical education professionals and to inform them of our goal to develop these standards for FCS (Fox & Erickson, 2003a). It also enabled their input in several areas, including criteria, content, and format for the standards; ways to build stakeholder involvement; and overall processes for developing the standards. Another conference session, at the June 2003 American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) annual meeting, included FCS content experts, administrators, teachers, and teacher educators, thus fostering connections among FCS professionals in these various roles. This session also enhanced linkages with the *National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education* (NASAFACS, 1998) by using the 16 areas-of-study from these national standards for middle and high school students as a framework for discussion and input related to developing national FCS teacher standards (Fox & Erickson, 2003b).

Four overall criteria for the standards were developed and confirmed during this Foundations phase of the project, clarifying that the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* should:

1. Serve as an overarching model of excellence that describes what a beginning family and consumer sciences teacher should know and be able to do.
2. Delineate a core set of “essential standards” that are as concise and non-redundant as possible and for which there is a high degree of national consensus among FCS teacher educators, FCS content specialists, FCS teachers, and other stakeholders.
3. Provide a basis for national continuity while reflecting state variations and future directions within family and consumer sciences content, teacher standards, licensure, initial preparation, professional development, school settings, and teacher responsibilities.
4. Be developed through broad-based involvement by family and consumer sciences educators and other stakeholders who represent various local, state, and national roles, professional organizations, and perspectives. (Fox, 2003, p. 2)

These criteria were driven by two major factors. The first of these was centered in the many differences that exist nationwide in FCS education. These differences include the focus and implementation of middle and high school family and consumer sciences education, with corresponding variations in state-level teacher expectations and licensure patterns (i.e., emphasis on middle school FCS, high school individual and family courses, and/or high school career-

preparation programs). Additionally, many variations exist among universities that offer FCS teacher-education programs, such as type of institution (e.g., liberal arts, research, public, private), enrollment numbers and patterns, institutional priorities, funding sources, and institutional and administrative support for family and consumer sciences and/or teacher education. FCS teacher-education programs also differ in their structure (e.g., FCS-specific or merged with other career and technical education and/or content areas), in their staffing (e.g., number and types of positions, percentage of full time equivalent positions devoted to FCS teacher education, types of responsibilities and authority), and in the characteristics and credentialing goals of those who enroll. For example, programs can include degree-granting (bachelor's or master's) or non-degree options (post-baccalaureate licensure based on undergraduate requirements, and/or career-change programs such as Transition to Teaching). These options can be accomplished through courses delivered on campus, through distance education, through other types of professional preparation, or a combination. Some participants are earning their first degree, and others already hold a bachelor's degree in a FCS content area or another area of teacher licensure. Some may be seeking a second bachelor's or a master's degree in conjunction with teacher licensure while others are not. Furthermore, due to the FCS teacher shortage in many states (Werhan & Way, 2006), an increasing number of individuals are teaching FCS with temporary credentials and obtaining licensure simultaneous to teaching. For these individuals, licensing often depends on meeting requirements through alternate assessments and through courses offered on weekends or evenings, in summer sessions, and/or by distance education (Lee, 1998).

The second major factor influencing the above-listed criteria for the FCS teacher standards was the potential impact of national standards on accreditation of teacher education programs, particularly programs affiliated with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). It was determined that a concise set of standards that focused on areas of national agreement would enhance continuity and at the same time give institutions maximum latitude in designing FCS teacher education programs appropriate for their particular settings. Thus, the scope of the teacher standards is considerably different from the *National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education* (NASAFACS, 2008). The standards for middle and high school students were designed as broad, all-encompassing standards from which individual states and localities select. On the opposite end of the continuum, the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* were developed as a concise set of standards that describe only those aspects of FCS content and pedagogy that are widely agreed-on nationally. As a result, they are core standards for FCS teachers that serve as a foundation on which states and teacher education programs can build and, if necessary, add to based on their specific needs and goals.

All of these factors were in play at the first meeting of the FCS Teacher Standards Development Panel (hereafter referred to as the Development Panel) held in September 2003. As the project leadership team, we coordinated this meeting and encouraged broad-based attendance through a mailing to all universities in the United States known to have FCS teacher education programs; contacts with representatives of FCS professional organizations and the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America student organization; and e-mails to NASAFACS and NATEFACS members and other stakeholders. The 39 professionals who attended were from 25 different states. They represented diverse professional roles, institutional settings, and experience with national family and consumer sciences efforts. Several participants had been actively involved with development of the *National Standards for Family and Consumer*

*Sciences Education* for middle and high school students (NASAFACS, 1998, 2008), while others had not.

Prior to the meeting, we compiled information about the project goals, conceptual base, and criteria. This information was distributed through materials sent in advance and in presentations early in the meeting (Erickson, 2003; Fox, 2003; Stewart, 2003). The Development Panel participants further discussed and refined these components. They also shared information about FCS teacher education, licensure, and related issues in their various states and universities. Through small group discussions and reports, they considered 21 professional topics and FCS content areas for possible inclusion in the standards. These were drawn from the FCS student standards, professional literature, and teacher standards in other content areas.

At the conclusion of the September 2003 Development Panel meeting, a three-member subcommittee of Julie Johnson, Janet Laster, and Peggy Wild was identified to review the work of the overall group and develop an initial draft of the standards. This first draft included two major sections: Family and Consumer Sciences Professional Practices and Family and Consumer Sciences Content, each with several points and sub-points. Early in December 2003, this draft was e-mailed to those who had attended the Development Panel meeting for their review and feedback. It also was presented for discussion and input at a conference session attended by more than 50 participants at the December 2003 ACTE annual meeting (Fox, Erickson, & Stewart, 2003).

In summary, a great deal was accomplished during the Foundations phase of the project. Steps were taken to build on past efforts; connect with current educational priorities; and establish criteria for a useful, yet future-oriented, set of standards. As the project leadership team, we assumed responsibility for conceptualizing the work, preparing communication materials, and promoting widespread involvement by FCS professionals. The face-to-face work accomplished at the September 2003 Development Panel meeting led to development and circulation of an initial draft of the standards. By the time 2003 ended, a solid base had been established on which to build.

### ***Framework***

The Framework phase, which lasted from January to August 2004, featured ongoing development and review of the drafted standards. Another subcommittee of the Development Panel met in January 2004, Wanda Fox, Janet Laster, and Peggy Wild. They reviewed the input that had been gathered from the initial draft and provided recommendations to the leadership team. One of the recommendations, to simplify and condense the standards, was reflected in the February 2004 draft. This draft was condensed from 21 topics to 19, each with a heading and a one-sentence supporting statement, rather than several points and sub-points for each topic. Eleven of these topics were designated as “content” and eight as “professional practice.” This draft was disseminated through an e-mail survey sent to those who had participated in the September 2003 Development Panel meeting. They were asked to rate each topic’s status as an “essential element” of the standards and provide written explanations of their ratings. The survey responses were used to develop the April 2004 draft, which included 21 topics divided into three categories: Pedagogical Knowledge, Content Knowledge, and Pedagogical Content Knowledge.

The April 2004 draft was e-mailed to Development Panel participants for their review and input. It also provided the basis for a 3-hour session that leadership team members facilitated at the May 2004 NASAFACS meeting (Fox & Erickson, 2004). Participants included more than 20 individuals who provide state-level leadership for FCS programs across the United States. In

this session, we outlined purposes and functions of national teacher standards, gave an update of the standards-development process, described the potential long-term influence of the standards, and sought participants' input on future trends that impact FCS education. Participants gave oral and written feedback on the draft and made recommendations for the review and dissemination of the standards.

The April 2004 draft also was featured at a workshop at the June 2004 annual meeting of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. This AAFCS workshop proved especially valuable due to participation by more than 100 professionals, including university faculty and administrators, content specialists who work with the Cooperative Extension Service, state department of education personnel, and middle and high school teachers. The extended, 3-hour time frame provided opportunities for participants' individual examination of the draft, for structured small-group discussion, and for oral and written feedback on the draft (Fox, Erickson, & Stewart, 2004).

As has been described, during the *Framework* phase two major drafts of the standards were developed and circulated for review. The second, April 2004 version, had particularly extensive review through e-mail distribution to Development Panel participants, at the NASAFACS meeting, and through systematic examination during the workshop at the AAFCS meeting. At the conclusion of this phase, the leadership team organized the feedback these groups had provided in preparation for the fourth and final phase of the standards-development project.

### ***Final Design***

The Final Design phase of the project was accomplished in fall 2004. Early in September a four-member group (Patricia Erickson and Wanda Fox from the leadership team and Lucy Campanis and Bette Montgomery as Development Panel representatives) reviewed the input that had been gathered from the April draft and honed it to a set of ten topics with corresponding statements. An online survey tool and procedures approved by the Institutional Review Board of Bowling Green State University were used to disseminate this September 2004 draft to the project e-mail list, which by now included more than 300 people who had attended conference sessions or otherwise expressed interest in the standards. Respondents were asked to rate each of the ten topics and corresponding statements on its importance as a component of standards for beginning FCS teachers and to describe what teacher candidates should know and be able to do in each area. They also provided overall feedback about the standards.

A second Development Panel meeting was held October 29-31, 2004. Thirty-six professionals from 20 states participated, just over half of whom had attended the previous year's meeting. This meeting began with small group examination of the data from the online survey, followed by summary reports to the entire group. The process then shifted to a whole group effort in which the participants agreed on the ten topics and how these would be arranged in the document. The group clarified and defined the standards by considering a range of philosophical, institutional, and programmatic perspectives. This deliberative process enabled very thorough consideration and led to eventual consensus on the exact wording for each of the ten headings and statements included in the standards.

Following the meeting, the leadership team developed the introductory paragraph of the *Standards* based on topics that were identified during the group discussion at the Development Panel meeting. External reviewers examined the document and final edits were made. Early in December 2004 the proposed *Standards* document was disseminated to the NATEFACS

membership for their final review, and a vote conducted via e-mail resulted in overwhelming approval. The approved *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* document was presented and disseminated at the December 2004 ACTE annual meeting (Fox, Erickson, & Stewart, 2004b) and subsequently posted on the NATEFACS Web site (<http://www.natefacs.org>). Endorsement by the Family and Consumer Sciences Division of ACTE followed. This was achieved through e-mail communications initiated by Karen Mason, ACTE vice-president for the FACS Division, through which the members of the FACS Division Policy and Planning Committee voted to endorse the standards.

During 2005 and 2006, the Standards were disseminated and implementation strategies shared at several conference sessions (Fox, Erickson, & Stewart, 2005a, 2005b, 2006; Fox, Stewart, & Erickson, 2006a, 2006b). National meetings of FCS teacher educators continued, building on the *Standards* and addressing related research topics. Proposals were requested and a series of manuscripts were developed that related to the standards. These manuscripts were refereed for publication in issues of the *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences Education*. Thus, the *Standards* continue to provide a basis for scholarship, research, and program development in family and consumer sciences teacher education.

### ***The National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences***

The *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* document (NATEFACS, 2004) is presented in Appendix A. It includes two parts. The first part is an introductory paragraph delineating the purposes, characteristics, and structure of the standards. The second part presents the set of ten standards.

The introductory paragraph of the document highlights several issues critical to the development of the *Standards*, as discussed in earlier sections of this article. The paragraph also provides a basis for implementation. In particular, the phrase “integrated set of standards,” emphasizes that although the ten standards are presented individually, they will be implemented in connected and complementary ways. The paragraph goes on to state, “These standards are unique to FCS teachers. In addition, the beginning FCS teacher has general education background and meets overall professional education standards.” These sentences clarify the focus of the *Standards* on unique characteristics of FCS teachers, while recognizing that FCS teacher candidates are expected to have additional educational background and professional competencies, as are teachers in other areas.

The decision of how to arrange and sequence the ten standards is explained by the statement, “The first four standards focus on FCS content; the remaining six emphasize professional practice. In each of these two groups, the standards are arranged alphabetically.” This arrangement distinguishes between the content and professional practice standards while keeping all ten standards in a holistic set. Furthermore, the alphabetical arrangement within each of the groups reflects the equal importance of all ten standards.

Each of the ten standards includes a heading and a descriptive statement. The statements are written as actions, using verbs that describe higher cognitive levels, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Each standard describes a different dimension of a beginning FCS teacher’s abilities and was designed as a stand-alone element that would be meaningful if read and used individually, such as in accreditation documents. At the same time, the individual standards were constructed to be non-redundant statements that would be integrated with other components of teacher education. For example, these FCS-specific *Standards* interface closely with other teacher-education standards for broad-based professional education and for

developmental levels. They also connect closely among each other, both within and across the four content-focused standards and the six focused on professional practice. In a teacher education program, an individual standard could be addressed in one or more courses and/or field experiences. Likewise, multiple standards could be addressed in a specific course, and this course could be geared specifically for FCS teacher education, for multiple areas of teacher education, or for specific FCS content areas.

In all cases, standards-based teacher licensure emphasizes documentation and assessment of teacher candidates' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in relation to the standards, more so than their completion of specific courses, field experiences, or other program inputs. The documentation and assessment incorporate all of the standards for which teacher candidates are accountable. They also verify their impact on middle and high school student learning. Overall, the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* delineate those elements that are unique to beginning FCS teachers (Fox, Stewart, & Erickson, 2007).

### **Discussion and Implications**

The *Standards* provide a national base for family and consumer sciences teacher education. As such, connections are possible with other professional accreditations, certifications, and licensures. Diversity and autonomy among states are particularly important considerations as the *Standards* are implemented. During the development process for the *Standards*, a purposeful distinction was made between national standards for teachers, state teacher licensure, and teacher education programs at particular institutions. It can be challenging to find an appropriate balance among these entities that enables national continuity and yet provides latitude for individual states and institutions. For instance, the FACS process areas of thinking, communication, leadership, and management, which are described in the introductory paragraph of the *Standards* document as “integrated throughout,” are implemented differently in various states and localities, yet consensus was reached to list them in the introductory paragraph. In contrast, practical reasoning, which the leadership team identified as a key component of FCS education, was not specified in the *Standards* because of wide variations in how this concept is recognized and referred to in various states. Another issue relates to FCS content areas, with consensus achieved for the four core areas included in the *Standards*: Career, Community, and Family Connections; Consumer Economics and Family Resources; Family and Human Development; and Nutrition, Food, and Wellness.

Overall, in a standards-driven, policy-focused environment for education (Cochran-Smith, 2005) the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* help to document the rigorous content and professional preparation expected of FCS teachers. The *Standards* provide a framework for describing a “highly qualified” FCS teacher, for promoting the value of FCS education, and for increasing opportunities for student learning in FCS. The *Standards* also provide a basis for research related to FCS teacher education. Possible areas for investigation include (a) analysis and description of the underlying knowledge, attitudes, and skills teacher candidates need in order to achieve the *Standards*; (b) identification of observable behaviors and materials that could be used as assessment indicators; (c) examination of various resources, strategies, and delivery methods for the preparation and assessment of teacher candidates; (d) exploration of potential collaborations among various professional entities and institutions to accomplish teacher education; and (e) documentation of relationships among teacher education, teacher qualities, and middle and high school student learning. Such research-based evidence would contribute to the growth and development of the field.

### Conclusion

Development of the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* was a major undertaking that is providing a foundation for continued enhancement of FCS teacher education. The shared goal, visibility, widespread communications, and numerous opportunities to contribute led to involvement by a wide range of stakeholders, including many who had not previously been involved with FCS teacher education or participated at the national level. Concurrently, NATEFACS membership increased and more people sought leadership roles within the organization. Changes such as these indicate that the *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* are contributing to the goal of strengthening family and consumer sciences education and its positive impact on individuals, families, communities, and careers.

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APPENDIX

*National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences Document*

***National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences***

**National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences – Approved 12/04**

The *National Standards for Teachers of Family and Consumer Sciences* provides an overarching model of excellence for what a beginning teacher in family and consumer sciences (FCS) should know and be able to do. The National Association of Teacher Educators for Family and Consumer Sciences led FCS educators and other stakeholders from across the country to develop the *Standards*. The two-year, highly participatory process yielded an integrated set of standards with a high degree of national consensus, while allowing for variations in state teacher preparation and licensure. These standards are unique to FCS teachers. In addition, the beginning FCS teacher has general education background and meets overall professional education standards. As presented, the first four standards focus on FCS content; the remaining six emphasize professional practice. In each of these two groups, the standards are arranged alphabetically. The FCS process areas of thinking, communication, leadership, and management are incorporated throughout. Across all ten standards, the beginning FCS teacher demonstrates knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable student learning.

**1. Career, Community, and Family Connections**

Analyze family, community, and work interrelationships; investigate career paths; examine family and consumer sciences careers; and apply career decision making and transitioning processes.

**2. Consumer Economics and Family Resources**

Use resources responsibly to address the diverse needs and goals of individuals, families, and communities in family and consumer sciences areas such as resource management, consumer economics, financial literacy, living environments, and textiles and apparel.

**3. Family and Human Development**

Apply principles of human development, interpersonal relationships, and family to strengthen individuals and families across the lifespan in contexts such as parenting, care giving, and the workplace.

**4. Nutrition, Food, and Wellness**

Promote nutrition, food, and wellness practices that enhance individual and family well being across the lifespan and address related concerns in a global society.

**5. Curriculum Development**

Develop, justify, and implement curricula that address perennial and evolving family, career, and community issues; reflect the integrative nature of family and consumer sciences; and integrate core academic areas.

**6. Instructional Strategies and Resources**

Facilitate students' critical thinking and problem solving in family and consumer sciences through varied instructional strategies and technologies and through responsible management of resources in schools, communities, and the workplace.

**7. Learning Environment**

Create and implement a safe, supportive learning environment that shows sensitivity to diverse needs, values, and characteristics of students, families, and communities.

**8. Professionalism**

Engage in ethical professional practice based on the history and philosophy of family and consumer sciences and career and technical education through civic engagement, advocacy, and ongoing professional development.

**9. Student and Program Assessment**

Assess, evaluate, and improve student learning and programs in family and consumer sciences using appropriate criteria, standards, and processes.

**10. Student Organization Integration**

Integrate the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America student organization into the program to foster students' academic growth, application of family and consumer sciences content, leadership, service learning, and career development.

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